

# VINDICATION

O F

HIS MAJESTY

King GEORGE's TITLE

TO THE

Throne of Great Britain,

I N

A Letter to all true Protestants.

---

Written by George Godfrey, private Gentleman in His  
Majesty's Regiment of Carbiniers. of Londonderry

---

*Mecænas atavis edite regibus,  
O & præsidium, & dulce decus meum. Hor.*

---

Dublin: Printed by John Whalley in Arundel-Court, just  
without St. Nicholas-Gate 1715.

To the right Honourable William Conoly Esq; Lord Lieutenant of the County of London-Derry; one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, and one of the Commissioners of the Revenue of the Kingdom of Ireland.

SIR,

Sometime since I accidentally happened in Company of some Gentlemen. who set up for Passive Obedience, and indefeasible Hereditary Right: They made use of Arguments which seem'd very convincing, and which indeed, I having taken the Oaths to her late Majesty and the Succession, created very much uneasiness in me, this put me upon a serious Consideration of the Right of Succession, whereby I satisfied my Conscience, and fully convinced my self of the Justness of his present Majesty's Title to the Throne; I committed my Thoughts to Writing, and took an occasion of shewing them to some of my Acquaintance, who were very well pleased with them, and were of Opinion, that they might, by reason of their plainness, be of use to the Publick, especially at this Juncture, and therefore advised me to have them Printed, upon the strength of whose Judgment I have attempted to commit them to the Press; and being fully perswaded of your Integrity and sincere Affection to the present Government, and consequently of your Countenancing any thing that may conduce to the Honour or Preservation of it, I have humbly presum'd to shelter the following Vindication under your Patronage; and truly Sir, my being Born in that County whereof you have the Honour of being Governor, in some measure challenges your Protection of it; which is earnestly begged by

Sir, your most Humble and

Obedient Servant,

George Godfrey.



A  
**VINDICATION**  
 OF

**His Majesty King GEORGE's  
 Title to the Throne of Great  
 Britain, &c.**

**GENTLEMEN,**



AM not in the least surpris'd at the many deplorable Distractions, which are now among us, arising from the various Opinions concerning the Title to the Throne, and founded upon the Misapprehensions of the Doctrine of Passive Obedience, and the groundless Notions of indefeasible Hereditary Right: For such is the unhappy Temper of the greatest Part of Mankind, that they take things upon trust, and are led astray, never putting themselves to the Expence of the least Examination of the Reasonableness or Truth of what is offered to them. But, methinks Men, whom God has been pleas'd to endue with Reason, ought not to be thus indifferent in a Matter of so great Moment, as that of knowing to whom they ought to pay their Obedience; upon the Non-performance of which they hazard no less than their eternal Salvation. Now, because there are many, who otherwise are very well dispos'd, either through want of Time or Skill to make the Enquiry, may, by cunning and Jesuitical Insinuations be impos'd upon; I shall in a plain and familiar manner lay open the Nature of the King's Power, and our Obedience, and shew how far Resistance is justifiable; and likewise make his Majesty King George's Title fully appear; and consequently

that we owe to his Majesty all the Obedience that God has ordered to be paid to the Supreme Magistrate; and in so doing, I will not put you or my self to the trouble of a tedious search into History, or perplex you with a nice scrutiny into the Laws; but shall produce Arguments easie to be understood by the meanest Capacities.

That Obedience is due to the Supreme Magistrate is a Doctrine so fully taught in Scripture, and universally received, that I would think my self impertinent in attempting the Proof of it: Nay, it is so far from being denied, that they are not wanting who tell us, we ought to pay an active Obedience to all his Commands, or at least a Passive to all the Punishments he shall be pleased to inflict upon us.

This is the Foundation whereupon they erect absolute Monarchy, thereby investing the Supreme with an unlimited Power to act according to the Bent of his own Inclinations, notwithstanding his Proceedings should run counter to the main End, and chief Design of Government, the common Good; and so deny the People all Liberty of defending themselves, tho' the Supreme should invade their Property, and attempt the utter Destruction of the Nation: How pleasing such Usage would be to the Promoters of these Principles, I can't tell, but I am sure the Doctrine is not agreeable to Reason, or taught by Scripture.

Yes, say they, the Apostle St. Paul is very clear in this Case in the 13th Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, *Let every Soul, says he, be subject to the Higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God, the Powers that be are ordained of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the Powers, resisteth the Ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation:* Hence they conclude, that the Supreme is invested by God with an unlimited Power to act, and dispose of things as he thinks fit, and that the People are not, upon any Pretence whatsoever to resist.

How plausible soever this at first, to an unthinking Man, may appear, yet upon a very slight Search we may easily perceive the Unreasonableness of it, and be fully convinced, that it is not warranted by this or any other Part of Scripture.

The Kings of Israel had not this despotick Power, notwithstanding they were Personally chosen by God: The Truth of which is evident from that Passage of King Ahab being denied the Vineyard by Naboth, tho' he offered to make a Purchase of it. Now, is it reasonable to imagine, if the King had this Power, that Naboth would have been so foolish as to put himself out of favour with the King, by denying what was not in his Power to keep from him, or that Ahab would have grieved upon the Refusal? It is true Ahab, by the wicked Contrivance of Jezebell, got Possession of the Vineyard; but then it was by Virtue of the Law, for Naboth was accused, tho' falsely, and found Guilty of Blaspheming God and the King, and thereupon forfeited both his Life



Life and Inheritance, as you may read at large in the 21st Chapter of the first Book of Kings.

The means ought always to be proportionable to the End; now the End of Government being the Publick Good, to what purpose should the King be invested with a Power of doing Hurt.

Whence should he have this Power? not from God, for it would be Impious to think that God who is altogether Just, nay Justice itself, should give to Man a Power to act contrary to his own divine Nature: Neither had he it from Man, for it is highly unreasonable to imagine that Man would confer on his fellow Creature, a Power of utterly Ruining Himself, or Taking away his Life when he thought fit: Nay, Man had not this Power to give, for no one has a Power over his own Life.

It is true, The King has Power over the Life of a Man, when he, by the Breach of the Law has made a Forfeiture of It. But this Power is not derived from Man, but from the Law of Nature, whereby it is lawful to every Man, by that standing Rule of Self-preservation, to defend himself from all attempts which may be made against him.

Thus in the State of Nature wherein all Men are equal, if a Man attempts to take away my Life, and I cannot preserve it by any other means than killing Him, it is lawful for me so to do; and in case I shou'd be able once or twice to preserve my self from him, without taking away his Life, if he continues to repeat his Attempts, it is lawful for my fellow Creatures to assist me in taking away his Life, he being Incorrigible and laying aside his Humanity, declares himself an Enemy to all Mankind, and thereby renders himself Obnoxious to be put to Death.

But when Men entred into Societies, they confer'd that Power of Punishing Malefactors, which each Man had by the Law of Nature, on the supreme Magistrate, yet, tho' the Supreme receives it immediately from the People, the Law of Nature is the Foundation.

Hence appears the Lawfulness of the People resisting the K I N G in case he shou'd attempt their utter Destruction; for by so doing he Un-kings, and puts himself into his First State, and of Course on a Footing with those who were his Subjects, and thereby makes himself as lyable to be resisted as any other in the State of Nature: yet the Subjects are to be very careful that the Cause of their resistance be not frivolous, nothing less than the Supreme's Attempting the Ruin of the Constitution, and their earnestly endeavouring and making use of all other milder Terms to win him to his Duty can excuse them before God.

It is enough, says our Saviour, *That the Servant be as his Lord*: Is it not then sufficient, that the King should be invested with a Power of doing Justice, when God, who is Omnipotent and Lord of all, has it not in his Power to do Injustice: Nay, David expressly says, *He that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.* 11. Sam. 23 Chap. 3 ver.

But

But, say they, the King is accountable to God alone, he therefore is the only Judge; of what force this might have been among the *Israelites* I will not here debate, but I am sure it is of none with us. for,

The Constitution of *Britain*, is an Agreement between King and People, whereby on the one Hand, the King is oblig'd to keep, maintain and support the Laws of the Land; and on the other, the People are to pay to him Obedience in the Execution of his Office: Now can any with the least Colour of Reason say, that the King has by this agreement a Power given him to Act contrary to the Agreement; or that the People who were Capable of making the Agreement, are not also Capable of Judging whether the Agreement be or be not performed.

I bargain with a Clock-maker, to take care of my Clock which at present goes very well, and for so doing, I am from Time to Time to pay him certain Sums of Money, but he is so far from keeping my Clock in Order, that at once he breaks it into pieces; will any one be so mad as to say, that he has a Title to, or I lye under any Obligation of paying that Money, thus covenanted for. Nay, is it not much more reasonable to conclude, that he is to be accountable to me for the Damage done to my Clock?

But, say they, the case is not Parallel, for here there are Superior Judges to Apply unto, but in the King's Case there are none save God: Who then shall Judge him?

I will not take up Time in making good the Comparison, tho' it be very plain, but shall directly Answer the Question, who shall Judge him?

The Lords and Commons, who are the Body of the Nation shall, and that this is in their Power is very Clear, for they who can on certain Conditions Lodge a Power in the Person of any Man, can likewise upon Non-Performance resume that Power; so the King having through his Default lost the Power, has also lost his Superemacy, and becomes Subject to those who have that Power which he formerly had.

Every one knows, that Agreements equally Bind both Parties; so that if either side Fail in the Performance of his Part, the other is altogether Freed from the Obligation he put himself under by that Agreement.

Hence it follows, that notwithstanding the People of *Britain* have taken the Oath of Allegiance to the King, thereby obliging themselves, as Subjects, to pay Obedience to him; yet if the King, either by open Violence, or secret Contrivance, attempts the utter Subversion of Church and State, as the late King *James* did, thereby Breaking his Coronation Oath, they are altogether Freed from the Obligation of their Oath, he being no longer King than he performs his part of the Agreement: For it is not to the Person of the King, but to his Government, which ought to be according to the Laws they Swear to; and consequently the Power which they had of making a King at first is returned to them, and which they may make use of in choosing another.

That



That this is reasonable is clear from God's reserving to himself the Power of taking the Kingdom, upon Male-Administration, from the Kings of *Israel*; so God having left the making the Kings of *Britain* to the People, has also put it in their Power to choose another, in case they act contrary to the Trust committed to their Charge.

That King's, since those of *Israel*, have their Title from Humane, not Divine Right, that is, are chose by the People, is a Truth so manifest, that I admire there should be any who would Assert the contrary: Let such Gentlemen tell the Time when, or the Person whom God Chose, or by what Prophet the Kings of *Britain* were Anointed.

It is true, God has ordain'd a Power wherewith the Supreme is invested, but the Person is altogether left to the choice of the People. *St. Peter* is very clear in this Point: *Submit your selves*, says he, *to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme, or Governors, as those sent by him, for the Punishment of Vice*, 1 Pet. cap. 2. ver. 13. whence it is evident that the King is an Ordinance of Man, to whom this Submission is to be made.

The Power then wherewith the Supreme Magistrate is Invested, and is the Ordinance of God, and to which, we must, upon pain of Damnation, pay our Obedience, is that of putting the Laws in Execution, of distributing Rewards and Punishments, according to the provision made by the Law in each particular case which may come before him.

That this is the utmost extent of Kingly Power, is evident from the above quoted 13th to the *Romans*, in the Verses immediately following the Injunction of Obedience: *For Rulers*, says the Apostle, *are not a Terror to good Works, but to Evil: wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power. Do that which is Good, and thou shalt receive Praise of the same, for he is the Minister of God to thee for Good; but if thou do that which is Evil be afraid, for he beareth not the Sword in Vain, for he is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon them that worketh Evil*: Whence these two things Manifestly appear. 1st. That the End of Government is the publick good, for says the Text, *He is the Minister of God to thee for Good*. 2ly, That it is not in the Power of the Supreme to inflict Punishments on any but those who are Guilty of Transgressing the Law.

He therefore who resists either the Supreme Magistrate, or Ministers sent by him in the Legal Execution of their Office, resists the Ordinance of God, for which he shall, says the Apostle, receive to himself Damnation.

But if the Supreme assume to himself a Power which is not granted to him, and by virtue thereof acts contrary to the Laws, and common Good, the Resistance made in that case is no Sin, that Power not being the Ordinance of God.

If the King has the Power of making his Will the Law; to what purpose are the Parliaments call'd? To what End doth the King take the Coronation Oath. Surely none will be so stupidly Senseless, as to say, that the King,

by

by obliging himself to keep and preserve the Laws, has acquir'd a power to break and destroy the Laws; or that, because he is bound by all the solemn Tyes that Human Wisdom; yea or Divine either could Invent, to maintain and support the Properties of the People, he therefore may at pleasure deprive them of all their Substance.

How prejudicial would this Power be to all Industry and Trade; for who would toil themselves, and hazard their Lives so often in the Tempestuous Seas; if after all their Fatigue, they could not call what they had their own, or were not sure of one Moments Possession of it.

Thus in my humble Opinion, I have prov'd even to Demonstration, that the King's Power is not Despotick: That our Obedience is not Passive in an unlimited Sence, and that Resistance in case of Necessity is Justifiable.

How groundless then the Notion of Indefeasible Hereditary Right is, appears not only from what has been said, but likewise from the Succession, being altered even among the *Israelites*; instances of which are frequent in the Old Testament: Not to mention the many Alterations of Succession, which have happened in Britain by Conquests, yea, and since the Conquest, as that of *William* the Son of *William* the Conqueror succeeding to his Father, notwithstanding his Brother *Robert* was the Elder; and many others which would be too tedious to insert here.

Those Gentlemen then, who upon the Account of the *Pretender*, set up for Indefeasible Hereditary Right, do not consider that by that very Principle they utterly destroy, and cut the very Sinews of his Title to the Throne, unless they are able to make it appear, not only that he is the Son of King *James*, but likewise that he is Lineally Descended from that Family, on which, Indefeasible Hereditary Right, if ever such a Right have been, was Settled: For suppose the Succession was but once altered, that Alteration, according to this Principle was unjust, and consequently all Titles depending upon that Alteration are Invalid, the Right of Succession still remaining to the Heirs of that Person, who by the Alteration was wrong'd.

And it will be in vain to reply, that the long continuance of the Succession without Alteration confirms, and makes good the Title, for that which a Thousand Years since was unjust, is the same at this Day in the Sight of God before whom the Prescription made by Man is of no Force: It is certain then that the Successor possesses the Throne by the same Title which his Predecessor had, which not being good at first, remains so for ever.

But say they, suppose we disclaim Indefeasible Hereditary Right: Yet you'll allow that the Legislative Power of Britain is Lodged in King, Lords and Commons, that these are the higher Powers to whom we ought to submit, and that whatever is Enacted by them is Valid and Binding upon us, till it be Repealed by the same Power: Now it is plain that by the Laws of Britain, Hereditary Right takes Place; therefore the *Pretender*, being the Son of King *James*



*James*, has a Title to the Throne, there being no Act past, before his Fathers Abdication, against his Succession.

To which I answer, by absolutely denying him to be the Son of King *James*, and I am sure they cannot prove that he is; however, for the present, let us suppose him to be the Son of the King, yet he has no Title to the **THRONE**; for upon his Father's Male-administration and Abdication, the Right of choosing a King returned to the People, he therefore not having their Consent, has no Claim. But farther, the Queen his Mother not being delivered of him in the Presence of those Persons, who by the Law were appointed to be by at the Birth of the King's Children, he is but a Bastard in respect of the Title to the Crown: Suppose a Man Co-habits with a Woman some Years, and she bore to him several Children, and at last takes a Fancy, and marrys her, and then has a Child, that Child notwithstanding it is the youngest, shall inherit the Father's Estate, and why? Because, that is, the others are not born according to the Law.

If his not being born according to the Law takes not from him all Title to the Throne, what was the Law made for? What was the Penalty in case of Non-observance? Was it not the Design of the Law, that the People might be fully satisfied, by those intrusted, that there was no Imposter put upon them, and that they might be thoroughly convinced of the Justness of his Title to whom they were to pay their Obedience; the want of which Knowledge, it being their Right by Law, and having no possible Means of obtaining it, in case he was the King's Son, altogether frees them from paying Obedience to, or owning him as their King.

But if he be not the Son of the King, (which is more than Probable, for it is not to be supposed, that the King and Queen who knew the Laws, wou'd have done any thing that might have given Occasion of calling the Title of their Child in Question,) the bare Supposing him to be the King's Son, will not excuse their Endeavouring to wrong his undoubted Daughter.

Let those Gentlemen then who set up for him consider how they will answer, even according to their own Principle, the resisting the Heir, whose Title was indisputable, and who was chearfully Submitted to by all the Lovers of their Country and the Protestant Interest.

The Princes of Orange then, both by Hereditary Right and Consent of the People succeeded to her Father, who by his Male-Administration and Abdication was Dead in Law: Her Majesty Queen *Mary* by and with the Consent and Advice of her Parliament, made Her Royal Consort King, as a just Reward of his meritorious Action, in delivering us from Popery and Slavery; his Majesty King *William* by consent of Parliament, out of a tender Care of, and a heart Zeal for the Protestant Interest, settled the Succession in the illustrious House of **HANOVER**, which was afterward confirm'd by her late Majesty Queen *Anne*; and had there only a Bill of Exclusion past against all

B.

Papists,

Papists, his present Majesty by Hereditary Right, wou'd have succeeded to the Throne, he being the next Protestant Heir.

Thus methinks, his Majesty King **G E O R G E**'s Title appear's to be as full and just, as any King's that ever sat upon the Throne: therefore we are oblig'd upon Pain of Damnation, to pay Obedience to his Majesty in the legal Execution of his Office. And I am confident his greatest Enemy cannot charge him with the least Male-administration.

What remains then? but that we with one loyal Heart and Soul, unanimously agreeing among our selves, joyn in Opposition against the *Pretender* and all his Abettors; let us baffle the Hopes and Designs of the Papists, whose business, you know has always been, to make a Division among us, let us steadfastly resolve to hazard our All, in Defence of his Majesty, our excellent Constitution, and the Protestant Interest.

And surely did we but consider the dreadful Consequences of a Popish Government, we would exert our might and main against all Endeavours of bringing it in; reflect a little on the fier: Persecutions of Queen *Mary*, call to mind the many Massacres and bloody Butchries of the Year *forty one*; imagine you see your Wives big with Children delivered of them after an inhuman Manner, by having their Wombs ript open with a Dagger; fancy you spy your little Babes tos'd upon the Top of a Speir; remember the barbarous Usage of King *James's* Time; know that the *Pretender's* supposed Mother is yet alive, whose cruel Designs against Protestants are sufficiently known; but above all consider your Church will utterly be ruined, and Idolatry set up instead of the pure Worship of God: In a Word expect to undergoe all the Miserys and Tortures that the Malice of an enraged Papist can invent, or the Power of an absolute Monarch can inflict.

But after all, if you can be diverted with these dismal Tragidies, if you can tamely Submit your selves to Slavery; then set up for the *Pretender*, bring in Popery with a high Hand, and let Tyranny sit Triumphant upon the Throne.

Ay, but it is certain the *Pretender* is turn'd Protestant, therefore we need not be apprehensive of any of these Calamities

Good God! have you quite lost all thought, are you altogether deprived of Sense, or do you willingly reason your self into Delusion; have you not already had sufficient Proof of a *Papist's* Conversion in his suppos'd Father: Do you not know that a *Papist* by the Principles of his Religion, is not obliged to keep Faith with Hereticks, (such as they call us:) Do you not consider, that by the Popes Indulgence, and by virtue of Evasions, Equivocations, and Mental Reservations, a *Papist* may, for the good of the Catholick Cause, oblige himself by Oath to the performance of that, which at the same Time, he is fully resolv'd to act contrary to.

Deceive not your selves therefore with such vain Hopes, but let me again, and again Beseech and Intreat you to be thankful to God for the many wonderful



derful Deliverances he has wrought for us, and for his great Mercy towards us, in preserving our holy Religion, by filling the Throne with a Protestant King; of whole sincerity and good Will to his People, there is not the least reason to doubt.

Whom may God long preserve and continue for a Blessing to us; may he endue him with the Spirit of Wisdom; may all Evil Councillors be for ever far Removed from him, may Harmony and Agreement be always between him and his Parliament, may the common good be the Rule and Standard of his Government; may he be defended from all his Open and Secret Enemies, and after he has had a long and Prosperous Reign here, may he be Translated into Heaven; and there receive an Eternal Crown of Glory,

Amen.

Excel<sup>t</sup>

---

FINIS.

---

men A.

5-7-8

9x

21113



